

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

RESTRUCTURING HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION (HMA) EFFORTS FOR THE TWENTY FIRST
CENTURY

by

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

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ABSTRACT

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This paper underscores the critical need to incorporate conventional forces, as appropriate, into Department of Defense Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) programs in order to meet the challenge of a dramatically changed world following the events of 11 September 2001. The current policy of only allowing Special Operations Forces (SOF) to execute HMA efforts is ineffective and obsolete. Humanitarian Mine Action is an ideal method of engagement and a critical tool available to the geographic Combatant Commander in support of the National Security Strategy (NSS). This paper will examine the problem, propose alternatives and provide recommendations on how conventional forces may be utilized in HMA.

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RESTRUCTURING HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION (HMA) EFFORTS FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

BACKGROUND

The United States Government National Security Strategy for a Global Age has three basic objectives. These objectives were to enhance security, promote prosperity, and promote democracy and human rights.¹ This National Security Strategy serves as the basis for the Combatant Commanders' current Theater Security Cooperation Plans (TSCP).² The TSCP provides direction and methods for engagement, one of which is Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) because it enhances security and strengthens the bond between the citizenry and the host nation government by providing a climate free of the fear of death or injury by landmines. It also promotes human rights by preserving the most basic human right of all, life itself. This HMA training is usually performed by Special Operations Forces (SOF). The primary SOF assets include Civil Affairs (CA), Psychological Operations (PSYOP), and Special Forces (SF).³

The mission of Humanitarian Mine Action is to implement the National Security Strategy and TSCP by military-to-military (mil-to-mil) contact and engagement. The development and maintenance of the military-to-military relationships established through this program cannot be overstated. The HMA program provides clear benefits to the Department of Defense and the United States government. It facilitates access to countries and regions not normally accessible to U.S. forces. It also contributes to individual and unit readiness by providing exceptional in-country training opportunities.⁴ In the promotion of U.S. national and foreign policy there are two objectives for HMA.⁵ The first is to strengthen U.S. relations with other governments through promoting human rights, and encouraging peace, security, and political stability in host nations. The second objective is to improve training and readiness opportunities for U.S. military forces, while improving access and, as stated earlier, mil-to-mil contacts. An added benefit through engagement is the enormous goodwill generated by these type of programs. This goodwill positively enhances the opinions and perception of the general population towards the United States and also enhances their own governments' stature with respect to the local citizenry. It is one of the best tools in the Combatant Commanders' "kit bag" for engagement and absolutely, pure goodwill building. The goodwill is invaluable not only for the United States but also for the host nation with whom we are working. This is a win-win situation for the United States in a minimal investment, maximum return venture.

Special Operations Forces (SOF) are elite soldiers uniquely qualified to perform the HMA missions. They are highly trained and possess many varied skills and abilities. Special Forces (SF), specifically, perform five doctrinal missions: Foreign Internal Defense, Unconventional

Warfare, Special Reconnaissance, Direct Action, and Counter-Terrorism. These missions make the Special Forces unique in the U.S. military, because they are employed throughout the three stages of the operational continuum: peacetime, conflict and war. Foreign Internal Defense (FID) will remain the focus of SF in areas of the world where the United States is not at war.⁶ FID operations, SF's main peacetime mission, are designed to help friendly developing nations by working with their military to improve their technical skills, understanding of human rights issues, and to assist with humanitarian and civic action projects.⁷ HMA is a collateral mission for SF and they are primarily responsible for the actual conduct of HMA training. Their job is to train-the-trainer.⁸ The primary training performed by the SF is that of mine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) detection and disposal.

PROBLEM

REDIRECTED FOCUS

The War on Terrorism has redirected SOF focus to fighting and prosecuting the war. SOF have been at the tip of the spear in the war efforts which range from Kandahar, Afghanistan, to Basilian, Philippines, to Tbilisi, Georgia. The world changed dramatically following 911. Prior to this date, the operational tempo for SF was high.⁹ After that date it skyrocketed because of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The utilization of Special Forces for OEF has been extensive, and as a result, Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) is in a state of suspended animation. Because there are not enough Special Forces to go around, mine action programs have ground to a halt in most of the Combatant Commands. It has ceased to be an effective engagement tool. The War on Terrorism and OEF have resulted in a unique inversion of the roles of the U.S. Army forces. A large majority of the conventional army is not actively engaged in the war, yet SOF are so extensively employed that their sustained use may lead to burnout and attrition. Current projections estimate that the War on Terrorism will last from six to fifteen years before the threat will diminish significantly. A major theater of war in Iraq will stress SOF even more. Post-hostilities Iraq could tie up SF, CA, and PSYOP for the next six to ten years compounding the problem. Because of this "breakneck" pace, Special Forces have fallen approximately 15% below their authorized total operating strength of 9,100 personnel due to injury and retirement since 911.¹⁰

Not only has the War on Terrorism redirected the efforts of the SOF community but recent policy changes have had their impact as well. On 7 January 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld announced a plan that significantly transforms the United States Special

Operations Command (USSOCOM). Part of this transformation is an expanded role and mission for USSOCOM. USSOCOM now has greater authority and a much larger budget to kill and capture Al Qaeda and other terrorists. They can now plan and execute hunt-and-destroy missions.¹¹ Secretary Rumsfeld said, "the global nature of the war, the nature of the enemy and the need for fast efficient operations in hunting down and rooting out terrorist networks around the world have all contributed to the need for an expanded role for the Special Operations Forces"¹². The expansion of the SOF role in the War on Terrorism amply demonstrates the need to address the diminishing SOF personnel resources available for HMA.

THE REMEDY

As a result of the strain placed on SOF to execute the War on Terrorism, what can we do to re-energize HMA programs? We need to develop and employ alternatives if we wish to continue to utilize Humanitarian Mine Action as a vital engagement tool. Why? Because Combatant Commanders will still have engagement requirements in areas not affected by the War on Terrorism. An example is the country of Tajikistan, which is in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility. As a result of its civil war, the country may be infested with landmines, both anti-personnel and anti-tank. Although the country, at the time of this paper, has not requested U.S. assistance in ridding itself of mines; the Combatant Commander could not respond because there are no Special Operations Forces available.

There appear to be four alternatives to fix the problem: (1) We could continue what we are doing now and deny the combatant commanders this superb engagement tool. (2) We could try to ask Congress for additional Special Operations Forces positions, and, if approved, speed up the Special Operations Forces training so there is enough personnel to do both war and peacetime missions. (3) We could rely solely on the Department of State to contract and conduct the mission for the Combatant Commanders. (4) Or, we could try to train conventional forces to perform the role.

ANALYSIS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

BUSINESS AS USUAL

We could continue what we are doing today, and deny the Combatant Commanders this exceptional tool. However, the cost of inaction is just too high. The fact that HMA efforts have dwindled to near nothingness is harming the Combatant Commanders' strategies. Engagement and military-to-military relationship building is too important to ignore even with the War on Terrorism and other operations taking place around the world.

We cannot ignore the moral implications of doing nothing. We just cannot dismiss taking alternative actions because we've never done it this way before, it is just too hard to do, or the funding categories won't support it. We have to do the right thing. For this reason, failure to re-energize Humanitarian Mine Action is unacceptable. It is too important an engagement tool to not use.

ASK CONGRESS FOR MORE SOF

We could ask Congress to expand the number of SOF positions, especially Special Forces, to allow for the resumption of HMA programs and train them as rapidly as possible. However, this would be unrealistic for several reasons. The first and most obvious is that Congress would not fund any more spaces because of the inherent costs involved. In the most recent round of downsizing, the U.S. Army cut two Reserve Component Special Forces Groups from the total force to save money. Even if Congress did fund more SOF, it would be a mistake to speed up training. The Special Operations leadership firmly believes that SOF are not mass produced and their selection and training processes enable them to perform at much higher levels than conventional forces. We must resist the temptation to rapidly grow Special Operations Forces. This would only serve to dilute their standards and most likely reduce unit effectiveness. Based on these reasons, it's unrealistic to expect that SOF will be expanded beyond its current end-strength and that training would be accelerated to accommodate the execution of both missions.

LET DEPARTMENT OF STATE DO IT

The next alternative is to let the Department of State do all the Humanitarian Mine Action on behalf of the United States. The Department of State (DoS) program is outstanding. "The DoS, through its Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Office of Humanitarian Demining Programs (PM/HDP) is the lead agency in coordinating U.S. humanitarian demining programs worldwide. With basic funding from the Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related (NADR) programs appropriation, PM/HDP oversees the day-to-day management of bilateral demining assistance programs."¹³ One element of the DoS HMA program has particular promise. The addition of Mine Detection Dogs (MDD) to the Department of State HMA program has been one solution that works in many different scenarios and is especially effective when combined with other detection and clearance techniques.¹⁴ Mine Detecting Dogs (MDD) are provided by a contractor. The RONCO Consulting Corporation was awarded a five year, \$250 million contract in December 1999 to provide MDD support and RONCO has been a key player in Department of State programs ever since.

There are three specific objectives for RONCO to provide to the Department of State in the contract.¹⁵ These objectives are:

- Provide direct support to the PM/HDP including studies, analyses, information management, audio-visual, publications, assessments, and other support.
- Provide services in support of manual demining programs when MDD are not used; to include training, facility development, supplies, and equipment.
- And when required, assist in integrating MDD programs into existing demining programs.

Additional benefits of using RONCO is the flexibility inherent in using contractors. This flexibility ranges from program management, equipment procurement, to personnel hiring. The most critical drawback in using contractors is that a Combatant Commander does not have his mil-to-mil contact and relationship building tool in place. Contractors are flexible and can efficiently accomplish the mission but the military-to-military linkage is absent. This is an important part of a Combatant Commander's effort in relationship building.

Another positive aspect of The Department of State HMA program is Quick Reaction Demining Force (QRDF). HMA crises, either the result of natural disasters or man-made, can come up without warning, requiring an immediate response. In order to respond to these type of situations rapidly, the United States developed the QRDF. The QRDF would be deployed to demining crisis situations as directed by the United States Government, which will also oversee recruitment, provision of equipment, training, and supervision of QRDF personnel, both within and outside the Republic of Mozambique.

My personal experience with the QRDF occurred in Sudan in early April 2002. I was participating in the negotiation and implementation of the Nuba Mountains Cease-Fire and it became apparent that landmines in the region were a major problem. I called the PM/HDP on a satellite phone and requested support. Within 96 hours a two-man team was on the ground performing an assessment and the QRDF was dispatched to Sudan within three weeks. They cleared over fifty thousand square meters of land by the first week in June 2002.¹⁶ The ability to rapidly respond to crises is one of the primary strengths of the Department of State humanitarian demining program. However, going solely with the Department of State HMA program is not the answer either. As stated earlier, a primary reason for engagement is to build

military-to-military relationships which the State Department cannot provide alone. Department of State HMA is an outstanding asset available to the U.S. and the Combatant Commander. I recommend that any future programs involve both Department of Defense and Department of State capabilities. The incorporation of Mine Detecting Dogs and “boots on the ground” will produce a world class product and can be a vital engagement tool for the Combatant Commander. These relationships foster positive attitudes and enhance interoperability. A lack of military presence in a pure Department of State alternative is therefore unacceptable.

LET OTHERS DO IT

Since all the other alternatives are unacceptable, why not let conventional forces do it? The question is who would be most suitable and appropriate for the mission?

Combat Engineers

For mine clearance and disposal, Combat Engineers are the obvious choice. The Military Occupational Skill (MOS) designation for Combat Engineer is 12B. Given the extensive training and background a 12B has with both the installation and removal of landmines, it is not a leap of faith to imagine these soldiers providing sound, safe, and comprehensive HMA training to other nations. These are well educated and trained soldiers.

This MOS has four skill levels identified as Skill Levels One, Two, Three, and Four. At Skill Level One some of the duties a soldier must master include: (1) prepare and install priming and firing systems for demolition and explosives, (2) arm, disarm, and install anti-personnel and anti-tank mines, (3) locate mines by visual means or by using a mine detector, (4) recognize and neutralize booby traps, friendly and threat mines, and firing devices.¹⁷

Skill level Two builds upon the skill set taught in Level One with; (1) place explosives and clear misfires, (2) direct a mine-clearing line charge loading team, (3) direct minefield marking party and dispensing operation of mine scattering systems.¹⁸ Level Three training requires a soldier to be capable of; (1) direct minefield installation and removal, (2) preparation and submission of minefield reports, (3) prepare a demolition and engineer reconnaissance report.¹⁹ Finally Skill Level Four requires the ability to perform all previous skill levels in addition to; (1) provide technical guidance to personnel, (2) assign tasks to subordinate elements and personnel, (3) account for soldiers, materiel, and equipment, (4) supervise mine warfare, demolitions and combat construction operations, (5) enforces safety standards.²⁰

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)

These personnel also have extensive training in demolitions, however they are in relatively short supply and may be fully engaged in cleaning up unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Afghanistan and Iraq for years to come. The point is that they have the capability and training and could be called upon if available. In fact, in TC 31-34, Chapter 2, page 5, it is encouraged that an EOD specialist be included to deal with the enormous amount of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) generally associated with HMA programs. Because of the generally accepted use of limited EOD personnel in some HMA programs, I will not cover their capabilities in this paper. However, I do contend that their participation in HMA could be increased to complement the efforts of DoD programs.

Mine Detecting Dogs (MDDs)

Mine Detecting Dogs have proven to be highly effective, mobile, efficient, and affordable. Dogs are able to work in about 90 percent of the terrain where humans operate, whereas mechanical devices like flails, rollers, and sifters are only able to operate in a fraction of that amount due to terrain, road/bridge capabilities, weather, design and material limitations.

Dogs' olfactory capacity for finding explosives has proven to be highly effective. Dogs are trained to detect explosive odor signatures like the scent of monofilament line, TNT, or metallic wire used in booby traps and mines. They are also trained to ignore other odors and distractions. The initial training of these animals lasts from eight to ten weeks. This is followed by another eight to 10-week period of advanced training as the MDDs bond with their assigned handler. This period also allows the dogs to get acclimatized to whatever country they may be in. This extensive training and their detection capabilities make them vital to the identification of nonmetallic or plastic-cased mines, as well as HMA efforts in iron-bearing laterite soils which render metal detectors extremely ineffective. Mine detection dogs serve as a valuable and reliable demining tool. These mine detection dogs would complement any HMA program, regardless if it were executed by SOF or conventional forces.

Potential problems with using Other Forces

The use of conventional forces poses a few potential problems that need to be addressed. For example they do not possess the maturity, regional or cultural expertise, language training, the train the trainer experience, or funding line to perform this mission as well as SOF. How can these deficiencies be made up? Fixing the problem will not be easy. The number of HMA trainers and where would they come from also needs to be considered.

The number of individuals needed would not exceed, normally, eight to ten. I recommend that these personnel be at least E-6 in rank and have attended the Instructor Training Course (ITC). Ideally, most of the personnel should be in the grade of E-7. More junior personnel may be used but a certain level of rank and maturity is required for these personnel. The primary reason to use more mature individuals is because of the level of political and cultural sensitivity involved in HMA.

As stated earlier, using combat engineers as a substitute for SOF is an attractive alternative. The smallest engineer unit to be deployed for HMA is the platoon, a 30 member organization with tons of equipment. The downside to deploying a platoon of engineers to perform HMA is the size of this organization. A platoon is much larger than what is required for the mission. Security, billeting, and other life support requirements for such a large unit could be overly expensive and leave a footprint in the host nation which is counterproductive to the military-to-military relationship building effort. In order to use combat engineers in HMA missions, innovative personnel resourcing needs to be developed.

One solution could be to ask for HMA volunteers at the beginning of an Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course (ANCOC). Interviews and screening for the volunteers by the staff of the Humanitarian Demining Training Center (HDTC) could be established to select the most mature, technically proficient, and capable soldiers. Once the personnel are identified they could be formed into the HMA team. As the HMA team, they would continue to proceed through the standard ANCOC training but also receive additional and specific demining and/or regional orientation training that could be incorporated into the class schedule. This would assist in building team cohesion. At the conclusion of ANCOC they would attend the HDTC for comprehensive demining training and marry up with the CA and PSYOP personnel selected for the HMA mission.

Simultaneously a similar process could be established to identify officers required for the mission. These individuals could be identified at the beginning of the Officer Advanced Course (OAC). In doing the aforementioned recommendations, or something similar, a pool of personnel would be developed. These personnel could be identified with an Additional Skill Identifier (ASI) for tracking in the personnel system. After performing the HMA mission these personnel would then report to whatever unit they were to be ultimately assigned. By having these personnel identified at the beginning of school, either ANCOC or OAC, the disruption to the reassignment process may be minimized.

An argument that has been given for not incorporating conventional forces into HMA is the linguistic capability of Special Forces soldiers. Although most SF have a language capability, I

believe it is not imperative for HMA. For example, based on my personal experience with United States Central Command, in-country training for the HMA programs in Jordan and Yemen, was conducted through locally hired interpreters. The classes were taught by SF soldiers but the instruction was through an interpreter. In demining training the specificity and exactness of the lesson are critical.

The SF do bring the total package to HMA with respect to the skills they possess. Normally an Operational Detachment A (ODA) Team is assigned to a demining mission. Included in the ODA are medical and communications specialists that are critical. These skills would also have to be substituted if combat engineers and/or EOD are assigned the mission.

Medical support can be drawn from the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences (USUHS).²¹ USUHS personnel have participated in HMA in the past and possess the requisite knowledge and training to support future missions. I recommend that the relationship between the USUHS and Combatant Commands be strengthened in order to form closer working relationships. Like medical support, communications support may be drawn from other organizations which support the geographic combatant commander.

Key to making this a success is the commitment of the Combatant Command to keeping HMA a key engagement tool as well as the Engineer branch. The personnel needed will come from the Engineer community and imaginative methods need to be developed to identify and train the personnel needed. Again, business as usual will not work. Somehow, Special Operations Forces need to be temporarily replaced or augmented until conditions permit their return to full participation in demining programs. The key to making this transition successful is the strengthening and reorienting the Humanitarian Demining Training Center (HDTC).

Restructure the Humanitarian Demining Training Center

The first recommendation is to send conventional forces to the HDTC for training. Currently all SOF are required to attend the HDTC located at Fort Leonard Wood, MO to receive specialized Humanitarian Mine Action training.²² At the HDTC, SOF personnel receive regional and country specific information and background briefings to properly prepare them for deployment. HMA is a hazardous undertaking, and personnel must be thoroughly prepared and trained in demining and unexploded ordnance (UXO). Training includes mine and UXO identification, basic demolitions, charge placement for mine and UXO destruction, minefield marking, surveying, and demining. Demining drills include detecting, marking and recording, probing and exposing, placing charges, and trip-wire procedures.²³ At the conclusion of this training the personnel are ready to train HMA procedures to international mine action standards.

The additional training they would receive at the Humanitarian Demining Training Center (HDTC) would serve to polish and refine their skills. It would also provide them with the proper techniques with which to train others to U.N. standard.

Part of the HDTC course restructuring might be to extend course length to include such subjects as funding programs, budgeting, the interagency process, and personnel management. It might also be considered that the HDTC include an in-house quality assurance program that will evaluate student technical proficiency to maintain the high standards already established by the HDTC.

Utilization of the Reserve Component

The roles and functions of the Civil Affairs and PSYOP personnel in HMA are tough to replicate in the conventional force. Although Public Affairs may be able to execute some of their capabilities they would require extensive training to perform the mission. For this reason I contend that Civil Affairs and PSYOP personnel must remain the first choice in future Humanitarian Mine Action efforts although I do have a recommendation for the sourcing of these assets. All SOF are "low density, high demand" and, to alleviate personnel shortages, I propose that Civil Affairs and PSYOP assets be drawn more from the Reserve Component (RC) to ease the burden on the Active Component (AC). Currently, approximately 97% of Civil Affairs and about 75% of PSYOP assets are located in the Reserves.²⁴ I also recommend an AC/RC mix in future HD efforts to draw on the civilian expertise and skills not found in the Active Component. In this way both the AC and RC can accomplish the mission in the most efficient manner possible. CA organizations are regionally oriented assets. For example, the 352d CA Command is wartraced to USCENTCOM. This wartrace covers the entire engagement spectrum from peacetime to combat operations. If the entire organization were to mobilize and deploy for operations in Iraq, a backfill for any HD operations in the AOR could, and would, be designated to accomplish the mission. An added source, when needed, for CA assets could also be the U.S Marine Corps Reserve (USMCR) Third and Fourth Civil Affairs Groups (CAG). These organizations are designed to perform similar roles and missions as that of the Army CA units. All USMCR CA personnel are trained to standard, like Army Civil Affairs personnel, at the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, NC. The inclusion of USMCR Civil Affairs assets also supports the Joint Force Commanders' (JFC) effort to seize the initiative in non-combat situations through the application of appropriate joint force capabilities.²⁵

With 75% of PSYOP forces in the RC I recommend they be utilized more often. There are only three Psychological Operations Groups (POGs) in the Total Force. The Fourth POG is the Active Component group and located at Fort Bragg, NC. The Second and Seventh POGs are in the Reserve Component and located in Cleveland, OH and Moffett Field, CA, respectively. The amount of personnel required for any given HMA mission is minimal. The numbers required often do not exceed six individuals. Again shifting more to the Reserve Component will dramatically reduce the operational strain on the Active Component and should allow for the resumption of HMA activities on a global basis. PSYOP skills and capabilities are not replicated elsewhere in the force and their participation in HMA is required. However, given their current high OPTEMPO the Reserve Component can be a bigger player in future HMA operations.

Use of Public Affairs

Another alternative for relieving the strain on Special Operations Forces is to include Public Affairs in future programs. These personnel can be used in lieu of Civil Affairs or PSYOP personnel to support the HMA mission, but only after extensive training. Although Public Affairs personnel are not regionally oriented or trained as these SOF soldiers are, they do have some capabilities that can be adapted for the mission.

Public Affairs (PA) are trained to get the word out. In support of the HMA mission, Public Affairs soldiers could be used to train Mine Risk Reduction Education (MRRE) which is part of the role currently performed by PSYOP personnel. Before being able to instruct MRRE in support of HMA activities, the Public Affairs soldiers would require the appropriate training at the Humanitarian Demining Training Center (HDTC). PSYOP uses specific techniques to influence favorable behavior or beliefs in non-US audiences.²⁶ "All military operations involving contact with civilians designed to influence, control, or develop civil organizations are classified as civil-military operations (CMO). Public Affairs and CMO personnel disseminate information to local populations."²⁷ Public Affairs personnel could also receive additional training at the HDTC on information management and Survivors Assistance. An additional skill that would have to be acquired by the Public Affairs soldiers is the training required to be proficient in the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). The IMSMA is the standard information database system developed and utilized by the United Nations.

Funds

Funding is key to any operation. This is an area which, for the most part, is a matter of interpretation. The Department of State funding comes in the form of Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related (NADR) program funds.²⁸ NADR money can be used to

purchase equipment, supplies, and services for the host nation in support of HMA. All equipment and supplies purchased with NADR funds are then donated to the recipient nation to support the HMA program.

Department of Defense funding sources are Overseas, Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) and Foreign Military Financing.²⁹ OHDACA funds are restricted to support U.S. forces conducting HMA training. These funds pay the Temporary Duty (TDY) costs associated with deployment of the U.S. personnel as well as any training requirements. The second Department of Defense fund source is Foreign Military Financing. These funds are intended to meet the security needs of allies; therefore HMA related equipment may be purchased with these funds. When funding is allocated, the Combatant Command coordinates planning and helps implement the HMA Country Plan for the specific country involved.

One of the arguments presented by some is that OHDACA funds are only for SOF. I have reviewed the Defense Authorization Act of 1997, section 1304, P.L 104-201 and the subsequent Annual Authorization and Appropriations Acts which fund HMA programs and dispute that these funds are solely to enhance SOF training. Additionally Title 10, USC 401(E) (5) does not state that OHDACA funds are provided exclusively for SOF training. Conversely, these funds are intended to pay for costs in support of U.S. personnel, even conventional forces, conducting the HMA training. "Equipment purchased with OHDACA funds to be donated to the host nation must be itemized separately from equipment purchased to support U.S. military forces conducting "train the trainer" programs."³⁰ It is important to notice that TC 31-34 referred to "U.S. military forces" and did not specifically identify SOF when discussing funding. Therefore, funding is not an issue.

CONCLUSION

Restructuring the way we do business is urgently needed because HMA is an ideal method of engagement and a critical tool available to the geographic Combatant Commander in support of their regional strategy that directly supports the National Military Strategy (NMS) and the National Security Strategy (NSS). The price of inaction is too steep to contemplate.

It is imperative that Special Forces be freed from this collateral mission in order to execute higher priority missions. At the strategic level, inclusion of conventional forces will expand the utilization and engagement potential for SF on a worldwide scale. Operationally and tactically it will strengthen the conventional forces experience and knowledge base through direct mil-to-mil contact that heretofore was not readily available to them.

This paper identified the critical need to incorporate conventional forces, as appropriate, into Department of Defense Humanitarian Mine Action programs in order to meet the challenge of a dramatically changed world following the events of 11 September 2001. The current policy of only allowing SOF to execute HMA efforts is ineffective and obsolete. The integration of Department of State and Department of Defense efforts should increase in future programs. Humanitarian Mine Action is not a one size fits all proposition and therefore the capabilities that both organizations have need to be coordinated. No one effort should supplant the other. Restructuring the way we do business is urgently needed because Humanitarian Mine Action is an ideal method of engagement and a critical tool available to the geographic Combatant Commander in support of the National Security Strategy.

The incorporation of Combat Engineers, Explosive Ordnance Disposal soldiers, Reserve Component Civil Affairs, Reserve Component Psychological Operations soldiers, or possibly Public Affairs soldiers will expand the pool from which to draw from while freeing up Special Forces soldiers for Operation Enduring Freedom and any other contingency that might arise. This is a win-win situation for the United States in a minimal investment, maximum return venture.

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ENDNOTES

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⁵ United States Department of State. Office of Humanitarian Demining Programs Washington, D.C. Homepage (On-Line). <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/rpt/spec/2819.htm>.

⁶ D.M. Gingers, Special Forces, American Heritage (November/December 2002): 52.

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²³ Department of the Army. Humanitarian Demining Operations Handbook, Training Circular 31-34 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 24 September 1997), Chapter 3, 15.

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²⁸ United States Department of State. Office of Humanitarian Demining Programs Washington, D.C. Homepage (On-Line). <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/hdp/>.

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